

**An Ounce of Prevention Equals a Pound of Cure**  
**By Gary C. Ovitt**

In this advanced, technological age of medicine, you might be surprised to learn that lead poisoning is still a significant environmental health problem for children in Southern California. The 4<sup>th</sup> Supervisorial District, which encompasses the cities of Chino, Chino Hills, Montclair and Ontario, ranks among the 2<sup>nd</sup> highest in overall cases reported last year in San Bernardino County. We must take an active role in our children's lives in order to diligently protect them from the unseen harm that can lead to severe physical and mental problems.

I have always been partial to issues pertaining to the safety and well being of our children and am therefore privileged to continue funding for the Childhood Lead Poisoning Prevention Program. This funding will provide help to over 6500 children countywide that suffer from neurological damage associated with lead poisoning.

It is essential we combat this lingering problem for children and small infants. It is vital that women who are pregnant, understand the neurological damage that can result from exposure to low traces of lead poisoning in certain foods. As a former teacher, I have worked with students affected by learning disabilities and witnessed first hand frustrations and limitations such children can endure.

Recently, the U.S. Food and Drug Administration alerted consumers and took enforcement actions against companies who produce candies that exceed 0.5 micrograms of lead per gram of product. Medical evidence indicates that neurological damage can occur at even such low levels of lead exposure.

I am pleased the Board of Supervisors made the decision to address the medical needs for young victims of lead poisoning who are suffering from neurological damage, with the hopes of furthering progress towards societal prevention.

For more information regarding lead poisoning prevention, please contact the San Bernardino County Department of Public Health @ 909-387-6280.

Although I am pleased the County is funding such programs, nothing can replace the proactive actions of educated and concerned parents. This ounce of prevention will truly be worth a pound of cure to our most precious gift, our children.